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By Marc Vandepitte
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Millions of people have died needlessly from COVID-19



Sources: By Wereld Morgen [Image: Miroslava Chrienova from Pixabay]

Translated from Dutch for Rebellion by Sven Magnus

The scientific journal The Lancet has written a scathing report on the management of the covid crisis. Governments, as well as the World Health Organization, have screwed up to the bottom. Millions of deaths could have been prevented if action had been taken more quickly and effectively.

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Why were things wrong?

Since the beginning of the pandemic, [17.5 million](#) people have died worldwide as a result of COVID-19. According to [a report](#) just published by the prestigious medical journal *The Lancet*, it is due to serious failures in prevention, basic health care and international solidarity.

In the initial phase, the World Health Organization (WHO) acted "too cautiously and slowly." For example, it took too long to respond to human transmissibility of the virus and took unnecessarily to declare an international state of emergency. After the first infections were recorded in China, it took the WHO almost three months to call the outbreak a "pandemic".

The WHO also took too long to encourage travel restrictions and promote the use of masks. According to the report, the organization also took too long to recognize airborne transmission of the virus.

Many governments fell short. There was a lack of coordination among countries regarding COVID strategies. Governments took too long to examine the evidence and establish best practices for pandemic control.

Systematic disinformation was not sufficiently combated and there were not enough safety nets to protect vulnerable populations, such as older people.

"Too many governments failed to meet basic standards of rationality and institutional transparency, too many people – often influenced by disinformation – ignored and protested against basic public health precautions."

Rich countries refused to provide financing to low- and middle-income countries. They made sure first of all to save themselves and failed to "ensure an adequate global supply and equitable distribution of essential goods, such as protective equipment, diagnostic materials, medicines, medical devices and vaccines."

According to the report, the COVID crisis exposed significant shortcomings in the UN-based multilateral system. This is due to "excessive nationalism, tensions between the

great powers, and chronic underfunding of global public goods, including the UN system itself."

In addition, there is a "lack of flexibility of intellectual property regimes, the lack of adequate funding for the sustainable development of low- and middle-income countries, and the erosion of political support for multilateral solutions by great powers."

"The result was millions of preventable deaths and a setback in the progress towards sustainable development of many countries. This staggering death toll is both a profound tragedy and a huge global failure on multiple levels."

Recommendations

The report's authors list five essential pillars for successfully combating emerging infectious diseases: prevention, containment, good health care, equity, and finally, innovation and exchange globally.

The report offers a number of recommendations to avoid this debacle in the future:

- A "vaccination plus" strategy. This is a combination of large-scale vaccination, adequate public health precautions and financial measures to delay the emergence of new variants and reduce the risk of new waves of infection.
- Strengthen national health systems, establish national pandemic plans, and expand universal health insurance.
- Strengthen WHO by integrating the global response to future pandemic risks with measures to address the climate crisis and achieve sustainable development. Rich countries, in particular, are called upon to support and strengthen the collective UN system.

The elimination of vaccine patents is crucial to all of this. [María Fernanda Espinosa](#), co-author of the report and former president of the UN General Assembly, says it very clearly:

"All countries will continue to be increasingly vulnerable to new COVID-19 outbreaks and future pandemics if we do not share patents and vaccine technology with vaccine manufacturers in less wealthy countries and strengthen multilateral initiatives aimed at promoting global vaccine equity."

Sources:

[The Lancet](#)

The Lancet

The Financial Times

British Medical Journal

Source: <https://www.dewereldmorgen.be/artikel/2022/09/15/miljoenen-doden-onnodig-gestorven-door-covid/>

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